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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/648,024	08/26/2003	Masanobu Yamamoto	FY.50688US0A	3508
20995	7590	05/19/2004	EXAMINER	
KNOBBE MARTENS OLSON & BEAR LLP 2040 MAIN STREET FOURTEENTH FLOOR IRVINE, CA 92614				WINNER, TONY H
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
		3611		

DATE MAILED: 05/19/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/648,024	YAMAMOTO, MASANOBU
	Examiner Tony H. Winner	Art Unit 3611

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 August 2003.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The incorporation of essential material in the specification by reference to a foreign application or patent, or to a publication is improper. Applicant is required to amend the disclosure to include the material incorporated by reference. The amendment must be accompanied by an affidavit or declaration executed by the applicant, or a practitioner representing the applicant, stating that the amendatory material consists of the same material incorporated by reference in the referencing application. See *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 569, 179 USPQ 157 (CCPA 1973); *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 579, 179 USPQ 163 (CCPA 1973); and *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 577, 179 USPQ 167 (CCPA 1973). To overcome the objection, applicant may remove the incorporated by reference.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-3, 6, 13-15, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Pichler et al. (US. Pub. No. 2004/0031635 A1).

Pichler discloses a snowmobile comprising:

- a. A frame assembly (90), a drive assembly coupled to the frame assembly (figure 1) and including a drive belt adapted to contact a ground surface to propel the snowmobile over the ground surface (inherit, since the application is for a snowmobile operated on snow or ice crystal),
- b. An engine supported by the frame assembly, the engine including an engine body comprising:
- c. A crankcase, a crankshaft (3) rotatably journaled within the crankcase for rotation about a crankshaft axis,
- d. A cylinder block assembly extending in an upward direction from the crankcase, the cylinder block assembly defining at least one cylinder bore adapted to support a piston for reciprocal motion along a bore axis, and
- e. A balancer shaft (76, also see paragraph 93) rotatably coupled to the crankshaft and supported by the engine body for rotation about a balancer shaft axis, the cylinder assembly canted (figure 10) such that the bore axis is inclined rearwardly from a vertical axis, and the wherein balancer shaft axis is disposed above the crankshaft axis.
- f. The balancer shaft axis is forward of the crankshaft axis and is rotatably supported by the cylinder assembly.

With regard to claims 2-3, 6, 14-15 and 18 Pichler discloses all of the claimed limitations.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4-5 and 16-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pichler in view of Ashida et al. (US. Pub No. 2002/0148662 A1).

Pichler further discloses the air box is located on the opposite of the crankshaft and not on the forward side of the cylinder assembly as claimed.

Ashida teaches an air box defining a plenum chamber therein and disposed on the forward side of the cylinder assembly with at least a portion of the air box is above the cylinder assembly.

Based on the teaching of Ashida, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the intake system of Pichler to include the forward mounting of the air box of Ashida so as to provide an alternative mounting arrangement as oppose to mount the air box on the side of the engine as taught by Pichler.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 7-12 and 19-24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Izumi et al. ('715), Izumi ('754), and Yatagai et al. (US. Pub. 2002/0027029 A1) are cited of interest.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communication from the examiner should be directed to Anthony H. Winner whose telephone number is (703) 306-5957. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:30 am to 6:30 pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris, can be reached at (703) 308-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.



TONY WINNER
PATENT EXAMINER

May 6, 2004